

On page 6, above the paragraph beginning on line 17,
please add the following heading:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

On page 7, above the paragraph beginning on line 4,
please add the following heading:

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-16 without prejudice or
disclaimer.

Please add new claims 17-28 as follows:

17. A ball-and-socket joint comprising:
- a joint housing having first and second axial ends;
 - a ball head with a ball stud extending from the ball head, the ball head being received in the joint housing and the ball stud extending outward of the first axial end of the joint housing, a gap being formed between the ball head and the joint housing adjacent the ball stud at the first axial end of the joint housing;
 - a bearing shell received in the joint housing for supporting the ball head for tilting relative to the joint housing;
 - a housing cover for closing the second axial end of the joint housing; and
 - structure interposed between the housing cover and at least a portion of the bearing shell and acting upon the

portion of the bearing shell to urge the portion of the bearing shell toward the first axial end of the joint housing and, in response to wear of the portion of the bearing shell, to wedge the portion of the bearing shell into the gap.

18. The ball-and-socket joint as claimed in claim 17 wherein the structure advances the portion of the bearing shell toward the first axial end of the joint housing for wedging the portion of the bearing shell further into the gap as wear to the portion occurs.

Sub 4.1 19. The ball-and-socket joint as claimed in claim 17 further including a disk that is arranged between the housing cover and the bearing shell, wherein center portions of both the housing cover and the disk extend outwardly away from the ball stud.

20. The ball-and-socket joint as claimed in claim 19 wherein the housing cover is made of a plastically deformable material, the center portion of the housing cover being axially deformable toward the ball stud.

21. The ball-and-socket joint as claimed in claim 20 wherein the center portion of the housing cover contacts the center portion of the disk to urge the disk against the bearing shell.

22. The ball-and-socket joint as claimed in claim 17 wherein the bearing shell includes a deformable area, the deformable area enabling the bearing shell to be adapted for use with joint housings of varying tolerances.

23. The ball-and-socket joint as claimed in claim 17 wherein the bearing shell includes separate and distinct first and second parts, the first part being an upper shell and the second part being a lower shell.

24. The ball-and-socket joint as claimed in claim 23 wherein the structure includes a spring element that is arranged between the upper shell and the lower shell, the lower shell being the portion of the bearing shell that is wedged into the gap.

25. The ball-and-socket joint as claimed in claim 24 wherein the spring element is a wave-shaped spring washer.

26. The ball-and-socket joint as claimed in claim 23 wherein the upper shell, which is located further from the first axial end of the joint housing than the lower shell, includes a collar that is wedged between the housing cover and a shoulder of the joint housing and prevents movement of the upper shell relative to the joint housing.

27. The ball-and-socket joint as claimed in claim 26 wherein the collar includes deformable areas, the deformable

areas of the collar enabling a combination of the upper shell, the spring element, and the lower shell to be adapted for use with joint housings of varying tolerances.

B.
(cancel)

28. The ball-and-socket joint as claimed in claim 17 wherein the portion of the bearing shell is cylinder-shaped and is deformed radially inwardly by an inner wall of the joint housing when assembled into the joint housing.